

## A POEM FOR THE BOSS

You ask me into your office.  
I sit in the chair, nervously  
crossing my legs, touching my beard.  
When you hand me my raise  
and shake my hand, you think  
this is a wonderful moment for me,  
but it isn't.

Listening to your praise  
is as disturbing to me  
as if you were firing me  
or chewing my ass out.

I do not mean to do good work.  
I do not strive for it. It's merely  
how I get through each day.

Ultimately I will fail you,  
I will let you down. Not  
through the quality of my work,  
but because I do not want  
the same things you do.

I do not share your lust for profits.  
I only want to see the sun go down  
everyday. I wait for that moment  
when the car is in the garage,  
the gate is shut, dinner is cooking,  
the moon is huge and orange over the roofs  
and I am free again for a few hours.

## POOR

I remember times  
we were so broke  
I would steal rolls of toilet paper  
out of the crappers at work,  
stomp them flat and  
stuff them in my attache case.

and still  
we buy half our meals  
at the gas station,  
charging cheese and milk,  
bread and wine on the  
ARCO card, paying  
double price for outdated  
goods, and the oriental  
clerks leering at us  
like we were purple  
negroes from jupiter.



it goes on and on  
without relief, never  
a time when we have  
more than five dollars  
to spend at the Alpha Beta.  
this poverty would  
drive any normal person  
mad, I wonder how  
we take it.

I go for weeks on end  
without a single dollar bill  
in my wallet, yet I know  
men who feel oppressed  
if they haven't got  
four or five hundred a month  
to blow on the races or  
taking girls to Motel 6.

#### LUNCH TIME

I'm listening to opera  
and eating a turkey sandwich  
white turkey breast, sourdough  
bread, mayo, lettuce. It's  
probably the best turkey sandwich  
I've ever had. A minute ago

the boss stuck his head in  
and asked if I've written  
any pornographic novels lately.  
I explained that it takes time  
to get a long fictional work  
into publishable form, years,  
but that I have had some luck  
lately with the poetry,  
a collection forthcoming, some  
stuff in an anthology out of  
Nevada. He in turn said that  
he's got a video machine  
and watches porno movies at home,  
as if somehow that puts us  
on an equal footing as artists.

It's fall again, September 3rd,  
my mind wanders aimlessly and  
once again squares of paper  
blow through the air while  
I daydream of nirvana.